

## CHAPTER 12. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### SECTION 3. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTS

**1869. GENERAL.** The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Executive Order 11514 require federal agencies to assess the potential impact that any major federal action will have on the environment. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Order 1050.1, "Policies and Procedures for Considering Environmental Impacts," as amended, is the FAA's directive that implements the requirements of NEPA and Executive Order 11514. This section describes situations in which Flight Standards regional and field inspectors shall prepare an environmental assessment (EA) and provides direction and guidance for following the appropriate environmental analysis procedures outlined in Attachment 2 of FAA Order 1050.1.

**1871. TYPES OF ACTION REQUIRING AN EA BY FIELD INSPECTORS.** Operations specifications (OpSpecs) authorize the use of specific airports for scheduled operations. The issuance of an air carrier certificate or operating certificate and associated OpSpecs, and the amendment of current OpSpecs may significantly change the character of the operational environment of an airport. Thus, the Flight Standards field inspector responsible for the issuance or amendment of certain OpSpecs is also responsible for the preparation of the EA. Normally, the following situations will require the preparation of an EA:

- Amendment of any OpSpecs authorizing an operator to use turbojet airplanes for scheduled service into an airport not previously serviced by any scheduled turbojet airplanes
- Issuance or amendment of any OpSpecs authorizing an operator to use the Concorde for any scheduled/nonscheduled service into an airport, unless an EA for such service has been prepared previously
- Issuance of any OpSpecs to a scheduled operator to initially authorize the use of turbojet airplanes and to serve an airport not previously serviced by scheduled turbojet airplanes

**1873. OFFICIAL RESPONSIBLE FOR ACCOMPLISHING THE EA.** Administrative procedures require the governmental official who finalizes the federal action to also decide what actions will be taken as a result of the EA. In most cases, this official will be the assigned POI responsible for approving OpSpecs that authorize airports for scheduled service with turbojet aircraft. Due to the varied and complex procedures used in determining whether a particular operation will significantly affect the environment, the principal operations inspector (POI) must coordinate significant noise activities with appropriate offices. Procedures established in paragraphs 1875 and 1877 of this section ensure proper coordination and documentation of the EA. The POI or certification project manager (CPM) will coordinate with the affected geographic regional noise abatement officer (NAO) by communicating through the certificate-holding regional NAO when an EA is required for operations at an airport outside the certificate-holding region.

#### **1875. COLLECTION OF INFORMATION.**

A. To prepare an EA, certain types of information must be collected. When an applicant air operator is involved in the certification process, the CPM is responsible for collecting the information from the operator. In other situations, the POI assigned to the operator is responsible for collecting the information from the operator. The responsible inspector will advise the operator that this information is necessary for preparing an EA and that an EA is required before the OpSpecs can be issued or amended.

B. The operator may wish to prepare its own EA or contract with another person to prepare the EA. In this situation, the responsible inspector will advise the operator that the EA report must be prepared in accordance with FAA Order 1050.1. Most private contractors who perform this type of work are familiar with this order. The operator-prepared EA must be forwarded to the responsible inspector for processing.

C. The following information must be collected:

- Proposed airports at which scheduled turbojet aircraft service will be introduced
- Type aircraft and engines to be used
- Number of proposed scheduled operations per day
- Number of proposed landing and takeoff operations during daytime (0700-2159 local) at airports to be served
- Number of proposed landing and takeoff operations during nighttime (2200-0659 local) at airports to be served
- Air operator's long range plans (1 to 2 years) to include planned service expansion, planned changes in flight frequency, and planned changes in daytime or nighttime scheduled operations

#### 1877. PROCESSING THE EA.

A. Attachment 2 of FAA Order 1050.1 identifies the environmental analysis and outlines the procedures to be used in preparing an EA. Normally, aircraft noise will be the primary subject of a Flight Standards EA that supports the issuance or amendment of OpSpecs. However, the environmental analysis procedures in Attachment 2 of FAA Order 1050.1 should be reviewed for applicability.

B. Upon receipt of the operational information described in paragraph 1875, a noise analysis will be performed using the Area Equivalent Method (AEM) discussed in paragraph 1 of Attachment 2 of FAA Order 1050.1 and in FAA Report No. EE-84-12. As stated in paragraph 1-5, assistance is available from the regionally assigned NAO, and guidance is available from AEE-110/120.

C. Generally, if the results of the AEM calculations show less than a 17 percent increase in the 65 day-night level (DNL) contour area, it may be concluded that the federal action would not significantly

change the operational environment of the airport and a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) should be prepared. The preparation of the FONSI in accordance with chapter 4 of FAA Order 1050.1 is the responsibility of the CPM or the POI. See figure 3.12.3.1. for a sample of a FONSI.

D. In the event that the AEM calculations show at least a 17 percent increase in the 65 DNL contour area, it would be necessary to determine if the proposed action would result in a 1.5 DNL or greater increase on a noise sensitive area. The FAA's integrated noise model (INM) would be used to perform a noise sensitive area analysis. Such events should seldom occur because more quiet and fuel efficient turbojet aircraft are being used to introduce or increase scheduled service at small and medium hub airports. The INM calculation may also be performed by a contractor, and the results and recommendations would be provided to the CPM or POI who would be responsible for preparing and coordinating the categorical exclusion (EA/FONSI or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)), which may be approved by the regional division manager.

E. In case of doubt as to whether an EIS is necessary, the Flight Standards division manager or a designee shall consult with the regional NAO, AEE-1, and AGC-1. If an EIS is required, the Flight Standards division manager or a designee shall advise the operator and obtain any additional information necessary to prepare a draft EIS. The new or amended OpSpecs will not be issued until all issues and questions associated with the EIS are fully resolved and the regional director has concurred with the issuance or amendment of the OpSpecs. No decision on the proposed action can be made sooner than 90 days after the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has published a notice in the Federal Register for a draft EIS or 30 days after publication of the notice for a final EIS. See FAA Order 1050.1 for the EIS process.

#### 1878.-1882. RESERVED.

**FIGURE 3.12.3.1.  
SAMPLE OF A FONSI**

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION  
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT  
FOR  
AMENDMENT OF OPSPECS  
TEE TAIL AIRWAYS, INC.  
TURBOJET OPERATIONS**

**A. Proposed Action.**

Commencing on or about January 1, 1988, Tee Tail Airways, Inc. proposes to operate twin engine turbojet Fokker F-28 1000 aircraft over certain of its scheduled air carrier routes. The turbojet aircraft will supplement Tee Tail's current fleet of turbopropeller airplanes.

**B. Environmental Considerations.**

1. All airports that will be served by Tee Tail's F-28 aircraft, except for Mount Rock Airport, Anytown USA, are currently served by scheduled air carriers with turbojet aircraft of equal or greater size.

2. Mount Rock Airport currently accommodates approximately 32,500 aircraft per year of which approximately 2,490 are business jets; these include Learjets, Gulfstream II's, Sabreliners, Westwinds.

3. Tee Tail Airways proposes to operate only one flight per day into Mount Rock Airport with F-28 aircraft.

4. All operations will be conducted in accordance with established noise abatement rules and procedures.

5. A draft compatibility study recently completed for Mount Rock Airport by Smith Associates, Oxon Hill Airport Consultants, relative to noise control and land use planning, does not indicate that frequency of operations at present or anticipated in the near future is considered to cause a significant impact on the air and water quality, aesthetics, and/or social conditions. Additionally, construction, wetlands, flood plains, historic sites, coastal zones, and prime farmland considerations are not involved.

6. According to Advisory Circular AC-36-3F, "Estimated Airplane Noise Levels in A-Weighted Decibels," the Fokker F-28 aircraft estimated DBA

at maximum takeoff gross weight is 79.2; this is lower than many business jets and certain models of the B-737 and DC-9 aircraft which operate into most of the affected airports.

7. According to the Office of Environment and Energy Noise Abatement Division (AEE-100), a computer analysis for Mount Rock Airport disclosed that the 65 DNL noise contour would be increased by 6.5 percent from the addition of one F-28 aircraft flight per day. This is well within the limits established for a finding of no significant impact statement. The normal increase limit established for that purpose is 17 percent.

8. These flights will be operated during daylight hours only.

**C. Alternatives--No Action.**

An alternative was not considered appropriate in this instance.

**D. Conclusion.**

After careful and thorough consideration of the facts contained herein, the undersigned finds that the proposed federal action is consistent with existing national environmental policies and objectives as set forth in Section 101(a) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and that it will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment or otherwise include any condition requiring consultation pursuant to section 102(2)(C) of NEPA.

APPROVED:

DATE:

REGIONAL DIRECTOR, XXX-1

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